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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

EXAMINATION OF REPORTS PRESENTED BY STATES PARTIES
IN CONFORMITY WITH ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports awaited from the States parties for 1992

Addendum

GUINEA

[20 November 1996]

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Introduction

1. In ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 10 April 1990, the Guinean Government did not underestimate the significance of the commitment it was undertaking vis-à-vis the international community, on the one hand, and the children of Guinea, on the other. Conscious of the importance of this historic commitment, the Government has harnessed itself to action to improve the situation of children through several programmes. Today, despite the persistence of a fair number of obstacles, encouraging results that have had a positive impact on the situation of children have been achieved. These achievements are the result of the combined efforts of the people, national and foreign nongovernmental organizations and international agencies, under the direction of the Guinean Government.

2. Pursuant to article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, concerning the elaboration, by each signatory State, of reports on the implementation of the Convention, the Government of the Republic of Guinea is submitting its initial report. The present report is a balance sheet showing the combined action of the Guinean Government, NGOs and foreign agencies for the promotion of the Guinean child.

3. It should, however, be underlined that it does not merely enumerate the efforts made on all sides to ensure better conditions of survival, protection, development and participation by all the children of Guinea. It also evokes the pitfalls encountered and sets out the perspectives for further progress in improving the lot of children, without exception.

4. The achievements to the credit of the Guinean Government in the matter of improving the situation of the Guinean child amply show its wish for progress. As for the difficulties described throughout this report, they are painfully felt and justify our commitment to untiringly pursue efforts to ensure better conditions of survival, protection, development and participation of all children. This commitment will be maintained until the Convention on the Rights of the Child is effectively implemented.

5. In the present report there is a twofold objective : on the one hand, to review the situation, analyse the constraints and envisage future perspectives, and, on the other, to take account of the fundamental rights of the child, namely survival, protection, participation and development.

6. The general economy of the initial report by Guinea respects in its main outlines the General Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of Initial Reports dated 30 October 1991 (CRC/C/5); it will therefore be as follows : a first chapter giving the list of applicable texts on the protection of the child and summarizing information activities; a second chapter dealing with general principles as they emerge from articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (higher interest of the child), 6 (right to life, survival and development) and 12 (respect for the views of the child); the third chapter is devoted to civil rights and freedoms; the fourth deals with the family environment and alternative care. In the fifth chapter, we analyse special measures for the protection of children. The sixth chapter is devoted to education, leisure and cultural activities. Finally, in a last chapter, we deal with perspectives for cooperation with our partners.

7. In the basic document constituting the first part of the reports by States Parties to international human rights instruments (HRI/CORE/1/Add.80), a presentation of the Republic of Guinea will be found, together with information on the political and administrative structure of the country and the general juridical framework for the protection of human rights.

I. GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION AND INFORMATION

A. Mechanisms for implementation of the Convention

8. In the Republic of Guinea, very important provisions relating to the rights of the child were already drafted into legislation through the Penal Code of 1975, the Civil Code of 1983 and the Law governing the creation and functioning of children's courts. The Labour Code and the Social Security Code contain provisions on the protection of children.

9. The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by Order No 010/PRG/SGG of 17 March 1990, and the updating of the instruments of promulgation on 10 April 1990, have led to follow-up mechanisms. The mechanisms established for effective implementation of the Convention can be summarized as follows:

(a) Creation in 1991, in all the prefectures, of Committees on Children which play a role of social mobilization and advocacy for the Guinean child;

(b) Decree No 033/PRG/SGG/92 of 6 February 1992 creating new ministerial departments and Secretariats of State;

(c) Decree No 092/225/PRG/SGG/ of 3 September 1992, establishing the attribution, organization and functioning of the former Secretariat for Social Affairs, Promotion of Women and Children;

(d) Decree No D/94/076/PRG/SGG/ of 18 August 1994 on the structure of the Government and upgrading the former Secretariat of State to Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children;

(e) Decree D/010/PRG/SGG of 16 January 1995 on the creation and functioning of the Guinean Committee for Monitoring, Protection and Defence of the Rights of Children;

(f) Declaration of political will by the Government which has, since 1990, kept the month of June each year as the month of the Guinean child;

(g) Adoption by decree of a health policy through the expanded programme of immunization, primary health care, essential drugs (EPI/PHC/ED) and the integration of family planning into the activities of health centres;

(h) Adoption of an educational policy by decree No 174/PRG/SGG/89 of 27 September 1989;

(i) Adoption of a declaration on the population policy of Guinea by decree No 92/134/PRG/SGG of 14 June 1992;

(j) Elaboration in 1995 of the sub-sectoral policy on the supervision of young children, also submitted to the Guinean Government for adoption;

(k) Order No 300/PRG/84 of 27 October 1984 statutorily establishing private schools in the Republic of Guinea;

(l) Order of 1991 by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment statutorily establishing pre-school establishments;

(m) Creation of a central executive cell for the supervision of young children by decision Dc/94/380/SEASPEE/CABINET naming the members of the executive cell for the supervision of young children;

(n) Establishment of a Committee on Equity between Girls and Boys in schooling by the Ministry of Pre-University Teaching and Vocational Training;

(o) Elaboration of the National Programme of Action (NPA)-1990-1995 and the Intermediate Programme of Action 1993-1995 in favour of the Guinean child;

(p) States-General relating to the supervision of young children, in 1995.

(q) Installation, on 20 November 1995 of the Guinean Committee to Monitor the Protection of the Rights of Children.

10. Several Government agencies, and national and international nongovernmental organizations are working for the dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

B. Information activities

11. In the framework of a broad dissemination of the principles and provisions of the Convention to a target public (parents, teachers, children, opinion leaders, professionals in justice, etc.), certain measures have been envisaged, to wit: days of reflection, round tables, conferences and video caravans for teaching establishments, women's organizations, garrisons; "Children's" broadcasts on television and radio, stories and playlets to popularize and spread knowledge of the rights of the child and their implementation at all levels. Thus, the Coordination of women's NGOs in Guinea (with the support of UNICEF) has already criss-crossed the four natural regions of the country and the capital Conakry to carry out a broad dissemination of the Convention.

C. Constraints and perspectives

1. Present constraints

12. The low rate of financing of activities in the social sector in general and relating to the child in particular are a substantial drawback to the implementation of the plans of action identified to this effect. Difficulties connected with the disbursement of funds are also a blocking factor.

13. It is indispensable to translate the content of the Convention on Human Rights into our national languages as nearly half the population is illiterate.

To this, must be added the need to train the actors involved with children in the knowledge and mechanisms for the dissemination of the Convention.

2. Future perspectives

14. The following activities are in the course of execution or are envisaged:

(a) Support to the Guinean Committee to Monitor the Protection of the Rights of Children for it to function adequately;

(b) Setting up of the Children's Parliament in 1996;

(c) Multiplication of series of information, sensitization seminars to make the Convention on the Rights of the Child better known through the media, artists, NGOs, teachers, health personnel, institutions, traditional channels, opinion leaders, etc.;

(d) Setting up of an association of parliamentarians for the defence of the rights of the child in 1996;

(e) Setting up of an association of mayors for defence of the rights of the child in 1996;

(f) Institutionalization of a children's festival;

(g) Training of the presidents, judges and clerks of children's courts on the Convention;

(h) Organization of a national seminar on procedures of adoption in Guinea (amendment of national legislation on adoption);

(i) Studies and surveys on the legal protection of the child in Guinea;

(j) Support to the prefectoral broadcasting stations of the Guinean Committee to Monitor Protection of the Rights of Children;

(k) Formation of urban and rural women's structures on the Convention;

(l) Study of effective ways of combating traditional practices harmful to the health of girls;

(m) Constitution of a documentary file on children;

(n) Campaign to raise awareness of the follow-up of Government measures for the implementation of the Convention;

(o) Publication of a bulletin devoted to monitoring the evolution of the situation of Guinean children;

(p) Training of the members of the Guinean Monitoring Committee;

(q) Making of a documentary film on children in a difficult situation in Guinea;

(r) Study and survey on work by children in Guinea;

(s) Translation of the content of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the national languages of Guinea.

D. Definition of the child

15. In Guinea, all human beings aged under 21 years are considered children. In effect, according to the terms of article 443 of the Civil Code "the majority is set at 21 years completed years; at that age, one is capable of all acts in civil life". Organic law No 91/12/CTRN of 23 December 1991 in its article 3, fixes 18 full years as the age to become an elector. According to article 280 of the Civil Code adopted by law No 004/APN/83 of 16 February 1983, men under 18 years and women under 17 years cannot contract marriage. Nevertheless, there may be some age dispensations. In summary, all persons aged between 0 and 18 years are considered to be children in Guinea.

16. According to article 1 of order No 072/PRG/SGG/90 of 25 July 1990, the age of engagement or enrolment in the army, and call-up is set at from 18 to 25 years for all Guinean citizens for a duration of 18 months. The rate of recruitment is 95 per cent among men and 5 per cent among women. Measures are being taken to eliminate this discrimination.

17. Free deposition before courts, penal responsibility and sentencing are only admitted at 18 full years. Release from compulsory schooling is accepted from the age of sixteen; article 5 of the Labour Code instituted by order No 003/PRG/SGG/88 provides : "The contract for work can only be concluded with an individual having attained a minimum age of sixteen years. Juveniles under sixteen can only be engaged with the consent of the authority upon which they depend".

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

18. The need to accord special protection to the child was set out in the Geneva Declaration of 1924 on the rights of the child and in the Declaration on the Rights of the Child proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 November 1959 in New York. It was recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in the relevant instruments of the specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of the child.

19. In all the countries of the world, there are children who live in particularly difficult conditions and who need special attention. As we know, "the child, by reason of its lack of physical and intellectual maturity, needs special protection and care, especially appropriate legal protection before and after birth".

20. In this chapter we shall deal with the various measures concerning non-discrimination (article 2); the higher interest of the child (article 3); the right to life survival and development (article 6) and respect for the views of the child (article 12).

A. Non-discrimination

21. Guinean legislation makes no discrimination between children, except in the matter of succession. In Guinean positive law, legitimate children (girls or boys) have an equal right to inherit from their parents (father and mother). A natural child or child born of adultery legitimized by marriage has the same entitlement to inherit as a recognized natural child. According to the provisions of article 494 of the Civil Code a child, whose parent, at the moment of conception, is not in the bonds of marriage, has an entitlement to inherit from the legacy of that parent, if it is recognized by him. The quality of these rights is equal to that of the rights of the legitimate child.

22. In all cases, the natural child inherits from the mother. The child of incest can never receive anything other than alimony (article 378 of the Civil Code). The same will be true for the child of adultery, unless legitimized. However, when the main reason for the absence of legitimacy is racial or religious discrimination, the simple natural child will have all the rights of a legitimate child.

23. In regard to the foregoing, we can affirm that in the Guinean Civil Code, there is discrimination by reason of birth, due to the fact that the legislator has taken account of the sociocultural context. In effect, in the practice and customs of the Muslim community - more than two thirds of the population - the natural child or the child of adultery or incest has no right to inherit from its presumed father, sometimes, even if it is recognized. In point of custom, girls do not inherit from their father, although the law makes no discrimination between genders.

24. Definitively we can conclude that the law is in advance of realities. Hence the need to conduct a large-scale campaign of dissemination, information and sensitization to bring citizens to settle their succession differences before the courts.

B. The higher interest of the child

25. The higher interest of the child has always been taken into account by the legislator, both in the matter of trusteeship, adoption and separation of the parents (divorce or death). In all codes, it is easy to see that the interest of the child is safeguarded.

26. It is with the sole concern of preserving the higher interest of the child that the legislator has stipulated in article 403 of the Civil Code that: "the natural mother shall be the legal administrator of the assets of her children as minors...". And article 407 of the same Code stipulates: "When a child who is a non-emancipated minor remains without a father, mother, or guardian chosen by his father, the family council shall provide for the appointment of a trustee".

27. Furthermore, any person finding a newborn child shall be required to hand it over to the civil registry officer, together with the clothes and other effects found with the child and to declare all the circumstances of the time and place where it was found. A detailed report will be drawn up which will state in addition to the apparent age of the child, its sex, the names that will

be given to it, the civil authority to which it will be handed over. This report will be written in to the registers of the civil registry office.

28. It is specified in the Civil Code that in any case of trusteeship, there will be a delegate from the family council whose functions will consist in supervising the management of the trusteeship and representing the juvenile when interests are in opposition with those of the guardian. Article 412 of the Civil Code stipulates:

"Guardians and members of the family council may not be:

1. minors, excepting the father and the mother;

2. prohibited persons;

3. anyone who has, or whose father and mother have legal proceedings against the juvenile in which the status of that juvenile, his fortune or a notable part of his assets are involved".

Likewise, any person condemned to a corporal and infamous punishment; persons of notorious misdemeanour; and persons whose management would appear to evidence incapacity or infidelity, are debarred from trusteeship.

29. In the Labour Code also, the interest of the child is safeguarded. Article 5 of the Labour Code requires that a child must have reached at least the age of 16 to be a party to a labour contract. Article 148 of the same Code also prohibits night work by women and young people. Moreover, the minimum age of a master is twenty-one (21) years (article 31 of the Labour Code). No master who is single, widowed or divorced may give accommodation to a female juvenile apprentice (article 32) and all masters must be of good conduct (article 33).

30. Likewise, in the Penal Code, it is stipulated in article 341 that whoever has abused the needs, weaknesses or passions of a juvenile, to get him to subscribe, to his own detriment, to obligations, receipts or discharges, for loans of money or movables, effects of commerce or any other obligations, in whatever form this negotiation may have been done or disguised, shall be punished with imprisonment for at least six months, at most five years and a fine of at most 250 000 Guinean francs.

31. Any person who, having attended a birth, has not declared the newborn within the forms and time limits prescribed by the Civil Code, will be punished by imprisonment for 16 days to 6 months and a fine of 5 000 francs.

32. In case of divorce, children under 7 years are entrusted to the mother.

33. In conclusion, we are saying that well before the ratification of the Convention by Guinea, it was the will of the legislator to take account of the higher interest of the child.

C. The right to life, survival and development

34. This aspect is broadly taken into account in our different codes as we shall see.

35. Anyone guilty of assassination, parricide or imprisonment will be punished by death. Nevertheless assassination or murder by the mother of her newborn child aged under 2 months will be punished by imprisonment for 2 to 10 years (article 255 of the Penal Code).

> "Anyone who has deliberately injured or beaten a child under the age of fifteen (15) full years, or deliberately deprived a child of food or care to the extent of compromising his health, shall be punished with imprisonment for one to three years and a fine of 5 000 Guinean francs. If there were injuries, beatings or deprivation of food or care, illness or incapacity for work for more than twenty days or if there was premeditation or entrapment, the punishment will be from two to five years' imprisonment and a fine of 5 000 to 75 000 francs ...
>
> If the guilty are the legitimate, natural or adoptive father and mother or other legitimate ascendants or any other persons with authority over or custody of the child, the punishments will be those set out in the preceding paragraph ...
>
> If the injuries, beatings or deprivation of food or care have been followed by mutilation, amputation or loss of the use of a limb, blindness, loss of an eye, or other permanent disabilities or if they have unintentionally occasioned death, the punishment will be forced labour for time ..."

36. Any person who, having found a newborn child, has not handed it over to the registrar at the civil registry office, as prescribed by the Civil Code, will be punished with 16 to 6 months' firm imprisonment and a fine. Similarly, those who have exposed or caused a child to be exposed, or abandoned a child in any place, will be punished with 1 to 3 years of firm imprisonment and a fine of 5 000 to 90 000 francs against the ascendants or any persons with authority over the child.

37. The third paragraph of article 311 of the Penal Code stipulates that:

> "The father and mother who gravely compromise by ill treatments, pernicious examples of drunkenness or misconduct, in default of care, either the security or morality of their children, will be punished with imprisonment for three months to one year and a fine of 5 000 to 50 000 Guinean francs."

38. In positive law, as in custom, the husband is the head of the family. In this capacity, he exercises this function in the common interest of the household and the children. But the wife also works with him to assure the moral and material direction of the family; to provide for its maintenance, to raise the children and prepare them for establishment. The court may also dispense the father or mother who has offered to receive, feed and maintain the child, from the payment of alimony. It is also stated in the Civil Code that in

cases where the mother has custody of the child, the father is bound to contribute to the maintenance of the juvenile.

D. Respect for the views of the child

39. Article 12 of the Convention makes it obligatory for signatory States to guarantee the child free expression of his opinion on any question concerning him, taking into account his age and maturity.

40. Article 7 of the Basic Law stipulates that "every citizen is free to express his ideas and opinions in speech, writing and image". The child who is a juvenile is not bound by any of his acts except in the matter of crime. The juvenile of 13 years charged with a crime or offence may only, depending on the case, be subjected to measures of guardianship, surveillance, reform and assistance.

41. Juveniles aged over 13 years and under 16 years charged with crime will be judged if it is decided that they acted with discernment. But for offences carrying prison sentences, committed by juveniles of 13 to 18 years, if it is decided that they acted without discernment, they will be acquitted but will, depending on the circumstances, be handed back either to their parents, or to a charitable person or institution. If it is decided that they acted with discernment, the penalty inflicted shall not be more than half the penalty to which they might have been sentenced if they were 18 years old.

42. In civil matters, the child's responsibility is not retained; for it is considered that the child is not capable of discernment. He is placed under the guardianship of his parents, or of his surrogate guardians until his majority.

43. Nevertheless, the legislator has taken account of his opinion through article 393 of the Civil Code:

> "With a view to adoption, the future adopting and adopted persons shall present a joint request to the court. They shall be heard in the council room... Without prejudice to the special consent of his natural parents, the minor aged at least 16 years should express his own consent to the judge."
>
> Article 394 stipulates:
>
> "Revocation of the adoption may, if it is justified on very serious grounds, be pronounced by the court at the request of the adopting or adopted persons."
>
> Article 437: "The emancipated minor shall enter into a lease for a duration of not more than 9 years..."

44. In the mind of the legislator as in everyday practice, a child cannot express his opinion on account of his lack of maturity. The right of the child to free expression being one of the provisions of the Convention, efforts should be made to render such expression effective, notably in regard to the problems connected with the present and future of the child.

III. CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

45. Under this section we shall speak in turn of the name and nationality (Art. 7), preservation of identity (Art. 8), freedom of expression (Art. 13), access to information (Art.17), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Art. 14), freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Art. 15), protection of privacy (Art. 16) and the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Art. 37a)

46. The exercise of civil rights is independent of the exercise of political rights, which are acquired and kept in conformity with constitutional and electoral laws. According to Article 14: "all Guineans shall enjoy civil rights".

A. Name and nationality

1. Name

47. Filiation is the subject of an ample provision in the Civil Code. Legitimate filiation is established by a regular birth certificate, or, in the absence of a birth certificate, by a judgement by default. Births should be declared within fifteen days of delivery, to the registrar at the registry office in that place. Nevertheless, for births occurring outside the area and in foreign countries, these deadlines are extended to thirty days.

48. Natural filiation is established by cohabitation, acknowledgement by the father or the testimony of two or several persons. Article 370 of the Civil Code provides that recognition of a natural child may be made by a declaration to the registrar or a declaration before the judge. This recognition may not be made to benefit children born of incest. According to article 336 of the civil code, action against the State is impresciptible in regard to the child.

2. Nationality

49. The law determines which individuals have Guinean nationality at birth as their nationality of origin. Guinean nationality may be acquired or lost after birth, by effect of the law or by a decision by public authority taken in the conditions laid down by the law. The provisions relating to nationality contained in duly ratified and published international treaties or agreements, are applicable even if they are contrary to the provisions of domestic Guinean legislation.

50. Nationality is also a constituent element of Guinean identity. It is the subject of a wide ranging study in the Civil Code, from Article 20 to Article 169 and covers such varied aspects as international treaties and agreements, attribution, acquisition of nationality and their effects, loss and removal, reintegration, the conditions and form of effects relating to the acquisition or loss of nationality, etc.

(a) Attribution of nationality by virtue of filiation

51. The following are Guineans:

(a) a legitimate child born of a Guinean father;

(b) a natural child when the parent in regard to whom filiation was first established is Guinean;

(c) a legitimate child born to a Guinean mother and a father who has no nationality or whose nationality is not known;

(d) a natural child, when the parent in regard to whom filiation was established in second place is Guinean, if the other parent is of foreign nationality.

(b) Attribution of nationality by reason of birth in Guinea

52. The following are Guineans:

(a) a legitimate child born in Guinea of a father who was himself born there;

(b) a natural child born in Guinea when the parent, in regard to whom filiation was first established was himself born in Guinea;

(c) a natural child legitimized in the course of his minority if his father is Guinean.

53. Through the foregoing articles, it will easily be seen that the right of the child to have a name and a nationality is fully safeguarded.

B. Preservation of identity

54. In the Penal Code, the rights of the child concerning the preservation of his identity are amply taken into account. Thus we may read in Article 301 that:

"Anyone guilty:

1. of kidnapping, concealing or suppressing a child;

2. substituting one child for another;

3. attributing a real or imaginary child to a woman who has not brought it into the world;

4. not presenting a child to the persons with the right to claim it, shall be punished by imprisonment".

55. Anyone who, having attended a delivery has not declared the newborn in the correct form and within the deadlines prescribed by the Civil Code, shall be

punished as shall be anyone who, having found a newborn child, has not handed it over to the registry office.

C. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

56. In regard to all these freedoms, we shall say that in the legislation and in practice, a child (minor) can only express himself in regard to his parents. It is they who supervise and control everything he does or writes. They direct him, protect him as it were, and supervise him. Guinean legislation does not stipulate expressly on these freedoms, for, as we have said above, a child does not have the sense of discernment.

57. With regard to religion, it is traditional that the child born of Muslim parents is Muslim; the same applies to children born of Christian, animist or other parents. In principle, a child espouses the religion of its parents. But at its majority it is free to change.

D. Access to information

58. Article 7 of the Basic Law says that every citizen is free to obtain education and information from sources accessible to all. However, while legislation appears poor in this matter, practice is rich. Thus, for example, there are radio and television broadcasts specifically for children such as: children's television, educational broadcasts for schools, films for children, cartoon tales and legends, games, etc, children's theatre.

59. For a better understanding by children of their rights, it is planned to include in school programmes not only teaching on the rights of the child but also on the rights of women and of man in general.

E. Freedom of association and of peaceful assembly

60. Freedom of association and of peaceful assembly is a practice current in our country. There are an important number of youth associations and associations of interests throughout the country. They are of a variety of kinds (cultural, sporting, information, development). Youth organizations exist such as the "scouts of Guinea" which are centres of education but also of dissemination of information that is healthy and favourable to better integration of the child into its environment.

61. For some time there have also been groups composed only of girls called "majorettes". It will also be noted that, in all neighbourhoods, young people meet in certain places to play football, or practise other games. There are also many associations of young people to develop their localities.

F. Protection of privacy

62. Strictly speaking, the child has no private life that cannot be controlled by its parents until its majority. It is the duty of the parents to protect its life until it reaches the age of being able to discern things.

63. Nevertheless one may read in the Penal Code that any indecent exposure consummated or attempted without violence on the person of a child of either sex

aged less than 13 years will be punished by imprisonment for 3 to 10 years. Indecent exposure committed by any ascendant on a minor, even if over 13 years, but not emancipated by marriage, will be punished with the same sentence.

64. Any indecent exposure consummated or attempted with violence on the person of a child of either sex aged less than 13 years, will be punished with a prison sentence. If the guilty party is an ascendant of the minor or a person with authority over him, or if he has been helped in his crime by one or several persons, the penalty will be forced labour in time.

65. Any immodest or unnatural act committed with an individual of the same sex will be punished with 6 months to 3 years and a fine of 10 000 to 100 000 francs. If this act has been consummated or attempted with violence, the guilty person will undergo a prison sentence.

G. The right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

66. In the Penal Code, as in law 022/AL/78, the child is protected up to 18 years, unlike in civil matters where majority is 21 years. In penal matters, the child guilty of crime is judged as an adult as from the age of 18. In the Penal Code, as in the Code of Penal Procedure, there is abundant legislation on procedure for the judgement of juveniles. Penalties are also foreseen for those who have exposed or caused exposure, abandoned or caused abandonment, in any place whatsoever, of a child not in a state to protect itself.

67. As far as traditional practices affecting the health of women and children are concerned, a declaration made by the Government in 1989 and Article 6 of Basic Law condemn these practices. Nevertheless, female genital mutilation is still widely practised in the different regions of the country. Two NGOs, the National Coordination Cell on Traditional Practices (CPTAFE) and the SOGGO, are working towards the abolition of these practices.

68. The spirit due to Article 37 appears in our legislation for there is neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment for a child of under 18 years.

IV. FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE

69. The family is the basic cell in our society. This important environment is irreplaceable for proper development by children. It brings the child the psychological elements necessary for the development of its personality, for its survival and for its protection. It is therefore indispensable to prevent the child being cut off from its family, its natural environment.

70. The Republic of Guinea, in its policy for the protection of children, favours family placements for children found or abandoned. Placement in a reception or custodial institution remains the last resort. As far as young people are concerned, Guinea is trying to promote social reintegration through the liberalization of private initiatives in the sphere of training and social reintegration of children in an open environment. The Saint-Joseph de Matoto Home at Conakry, the Terre des Hommes Foundation,Guinée-Samaritaine and the SOS

Children's Village in Conakry and three informal orphanages are working in this field, without intervention by the State.

A. Parental guidance

71. Parents direct the child's education throughout its minority. They decide on the modalities of its instruction and professional orientation. They also have the duty to send the child to school at the age of 6 years. However, these rights and duties are limited by the insufficiency of school infrastructures, especially in the urban areas, and of teaching staff. It should be noted that this limitation is felt much more by girls, some of whose parents do not perceive the need for schooling.

72. To this must be added the low rate of school enrolment marked by regional disparities, disparities between girls and boys and heavy losses due to the conjunction of economic and sociocultural factors. To correct this state of fact, Guinea has set up a programme for structural adjustment of the education sector which has had concrete and encouraging results from 1990 to 1995, notably the realization of schools in the capital and in the rural areas at the level of the prefectures.

73. The rate of school enrolment has increased. In spite of these results, efforts must be made at the level of the supervision of young children in the pre-school domain in urban and rural areas. At present, there are about sixty nursery schools in the capital, Conakry. Some twenty community surveillance centres are implanted in the rural area with financing from UNICEF, but these structures alone are insufficient in comparison to the real needs of the population aged from 2 to 6 years in so far as this segment of the population is very large.

B. Parental responsibilities

74. Parents have the right to keep their children with them so as to enable them to enjoy other rights: the right to education and the right to surveillance .... Juveniles cannot leave the family homewithout the permission of their parents and the latter can force them to come back home. Guards and surveillance are all the more necessary as in case of damages caused to others by a juvenile living with his parents, the presumption of responsibility falls upon the latter.

75. According to article 16 of the Guinean Basic Law, "marriage and the family which constitute the natural foundation of life in society, are protected and promoted by the State. Parents have the right to ensure the education and physical and moral health of their children. On their side, children have a duty of care and assistance to their parents".

C. Separation from parents

76. In Guinea, children belong at once to the community and to the family, indeed to the society in which they develop. Economic difficulties and the high number of children per family (6 to 10 children) are often the causes of slackening of the family framework, break up of the traditional family cell and partial or total disengagement from their responsibilities in the education of

their own children. Thus children are often entrusted to other persons more or less connected with the family.

77. Moreover, the death of one or other of the spouses and divorce are also causes of family breakdown, consequently the separation of children from their parents. In case of divorce, children under 7 years are entrusted to their mother and children over 7 to their father with visiting rights reserved to the other parent who is duty bound to contribute to the education of the child in accordance with his means (article 359 of the Guinean Civil Code).

D. Family reunification

78. Generally, legal steps are taken to avoid separations of family members. In traditions as in laws, Guinean society fights against all forms of practices tending to further the separation of spouses as a corollary to breakdown of the family cell. In the spirit of article 16 of the Basic Law, the family is regarded as the basic cell of society. Provisions adopted in good faith sometimes prevent nomination of the mother to a post outside the town of residence of the family.

E. Recovery of maintenance for the child

79. The law foresees the obligation of maintenance to meet the essential needs of the child. But this obligation is only due if the person claiming it justifies vital needs which he cannot himself satisfy and if the person sued possesses sufficient resources to supply them. In case of legal action, an amount is fixed by the law for payment by parents at fault.

F. Children deprived of a family environment

80. This heading concerns children who are orphans, children taken in or found. They benefit from special attention for there is within the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children, a National Directorate for the Promotion of Children instituted by decree. Within this structure, there is a section responsible for the family placement and adoption of children taken in.

81. Before the setting up of this structure, private initiatives were encouraged and supported by the State to ensure the survival, development and protection of the children targeted above; they continue to be encouraged even after the creation of the structure. Policy in this matter consists in according priority to family placement which constitutes one of the most adequate solutions in the matter, in the sense that the child placed in a family, adapts better and often more easily. There it acquires and retains the cultural and social values of the group which has engendered it. Placement in an institution constitutes the solution of last recourse.

82. For the whole of the Republic of Guinea, there is to this day only one SOS children's village situated 24 km from Conakry with 90 children. Three other orphanages exist of which two at Conakry and one at N'Zérékoré. Religious congregations (Salesians, Don Bosco, OCPH) also work in the children's sector.

83. Some children severed from their families, often due to the separation of parents in contexts of polygamy, often find themselves in the street. For this

category, an alternative environment must be found. There are not many of these environments and they are all run by private institutions. The centres existing at present are:

(a) the Foyer Saint-Joseph de Matoto in Conakry whose work consists in prevention of street children so that they do not fall into delinquency;

(b) The Terre des Hommes Foundation which assists sick children and children whose parents do not have sufficient resources for their care;

(c) Guinée-Samaritaine which runs three vocational training centres, of which two are at Conakry (one on the island of Kassa, the other at Kipé) and one at Kouroussa (Upper Guinea) devoted to young people in conflict with the law, children at a loose end, school dropouts and street children.

84. The various structures that follow take care of children in difficulty from 0 to 18 years: the Bonfi orphanage, Belle Vue, the SOS Children's Village, all at Conakry and the Gouécké orphanage at N'Zérékoré, the Guinean Association for Social Reintegration of the Handicapped, the Hostel for Girls and AGFRIS. Budgetary constraints connected with the operation of such centres and the weight of tradition in the matter mean that the State has no centre created by itself. In spite of the efforts made by these centres, regulatory work needs to be undertaken for the moralization of adoption which remains a still recent practice in the country.

G. Adoption

85. This is also one of the measures for the protection of children. Adoption is a form of placement requiring a receptive family environment for the child which must be complemented by protection and appropriate special help by the State. Efforts were made to regulate adoptions in the Republic of Guinea well before the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Guinean Civil Code in its articles 381 to 394 has foreseen provisions for adoption. It provides for perfect adoption and simple adoption.

86. In practice and traditionally, custom allows that a child without a parent be entrusted to a member of the family or a friend of the family. The latter has the responsibility for caring for it as if it were his own child, and providing for its material and social needs. After ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, additional efforts must be made by the State to complete Guinean legislation in the matter especially in the follow-up of adopted children. Our legislation favours transnational adoption. But the policy is that national adoption is the priority and transnational adoption is only done in the higher interest of the child by the competent services.

H. Illicit transfer and non-returns

87. Questions connected with kidnapping or trafficking, pawning, prostitution of children and pornography are regulated by the Guinean Penal Code of June 1975 (see articles 289 to 290 and 299 to 300). Since the accession of Guinea to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, efforts still need to be made to apply these provisions effectively and to strengthen them by regulating family placements so as to prevent, avoid or eliminate illicit transfers and non-

returns. At this level, the decree establishing the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children as the organizational framework has set administrative supervision with orphanages. Protocols of agreement with other countries should be signed to strengthen the rights enumerated under this heading.

I. Abuse and neglect, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration

88. The Republic of Guinea has acceded to the United Nations Convention of 1949 on the repression of trade in human beings and exploitation of the prostitution of others and has taken the penal measures applicable in the matter in the Guinean Penal Code and related organic law.

J. Periodic review of placement

89. There has been no law, decree or order fixing the periodicity of the placement. But in practice, the National Directorate for the Promotion of Children makes unscheduled domiciliary visits to the families with which partnership has been established. Registers are created for this purpose for the identification of the children and families that give moral guarantees by undertaking to care for the children taken in as good family fathers and mothers. Proofs of identity are required to benefit from placement. After a period for observation and social inquiry which may last from 3 to 6 months, a decision is taken by the territorially competent court whether or not to entrust guardianship of the child to the family requesting it. In any case, a name must be given to the child. The procedure terminates with simple or perfect adoption before the courts. A copy of every adoption decision is filed in the individual child's dossier kept at the Directorate for the Promotion of Children.

K. Constraints and perspectives

1. Present constraints

90. Budgetary constraints and the weakness of the Government funding allotted to the social sector. Lack of institutional support for the creation of centres for rehabilitation and reintegration for children in conflict with the law. Insufficiency of training of officials responsible for management of child-related problems at all levels, justice professionals and social workers. Lack of material resources at the level of the institutions specialised in work with children.

2. Future perspectives

91. The following activities are envisaged:

(a) Popularization of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national legislation on the recognized rights of the Guinean child and national policies for the promotion of children; translation of the Convention into our national languages.

(b) National survey of children in difficult situations and definition of a policy in favour of children in difficult situations.

(c) Construction and equipment of rehabilitation centres for children in conflict with the law.

(d) Development of information, education and communication (IEC) by enriching and diversifying schedules of radio and television broadcasts for children.

(e) Proper functioning of the Guinean Committee to monitor the protection of the rights of children and committees on children in the prefectures; institutional support for the establishment of a Committee in all the prefectures and in the 5 communes of the capital (Conakry).

(f) Setting up of an Office of complaints about violations of the rights of the child.

(g) Construction and equipment of a centre for physical rehabilitation of children.

V. SPECIAL MEASURES OF PROTECTION

92. Children in a situation of emergency are children whose past has left physical and psychological sequelae. This results in a state of psychological tension hardly compatible with the immediate institution of a project for life. These are children discharged from prison, refugees, ill-treated, abandoned and handicapped children.

A. Refugee children

93. Guinea has been strongly affected by the consequences of the wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. But faithful and respectful of the provisions and terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rightts and Welfare of the Child to which it has subscribed, Guinea has opened its doors wide to nearly a million refugees, in conformity with its customs and tradition. They have been given shelter throughout the national territory, but especially in Forest Guinea which has been their reception area. Children constitute more than 65% of the refugee population.

94. Apart from those taken in hand by the HCR whose number is evaluated at 43 499 Liberian and Sierra Leone children in the camps of N'Zérékoré, a certain number of refugee children have integrated into local working structures while others have not escaped into the street. Since the beginning of 1995, 50 000 refugees from Sierra Leone have been counted at Forécariah, as a result of the sudden resurgence of armed conflict in Sierra Leone the same year, of whom 60 per cent are children.

95. Boreholes and wells have been dug and converted; latrines have been installed with the support of international organizations (UNICEF, HCR) and NGOs with a view to preventing degradation of the health situation in the areas of implantation. Essential drugs, vaccines and nutritional supplements have been distributed to all the target groups. UNICEF has also financed the construction of 6 primary schools and 18 classrooms equipped with tables with benches.

Principal legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures

96. Guinea has adhered to international agreements on refugees including the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the OAU Convention governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Thus Guinea recognizes the definition of refugee as expressed by the United Nations and the OAU defining refugees as individuals fleeing the generalized conditions of civil war. This right is recognized by the Guinean Basic Law in Article 11 when it provides that whoever is persecuted on account of his political, philosophical, religious, scientific or cultural opinions for the defence of freedom, has right of asylum on the territory of the Republic of Guinea.

97. In the field, Guinea cooperates with the United Nations system, in particular the HCR, WFP and UNICEF which also have representatives in the zones where there is an influx of refugees. Other agencies such as WHO, FAO, the World Bank, the Red Cross and Médecins sans Frontières make emergency interventions and carry out other activities aimed at managing the vulnerable groups constituted by women and children. The promotion of micro-projects to create and increase the income of refugees should also be noted.

98. Three statistical tables concerning refugees in Guinea from 1990 to 1995 will be found below.

Table 1

Number of refugees in affected zones of Forest Guinea (1990)

Prefectures	Area km²	Refugee population	Autochtonous population	% Total population
1. Beyla	17 452	32 000	149 261	27 %
2. Guéckedou	4 157	132 000	180 966	73 %
3. Kissidougou	8 872	14 000	176 667	8 %
4. Lola	4 219	36 000	94 906	38 %
5. Macenta	8 710	84 000	176 171	48 %
6. N'Zérékoré	3 781	112 000	240 827	47 %
7. Yomou	2 183	20 000	67 913	44 %
General Total	49 374	430 000	1 086 711	

Source: UNICEF 1990

Table 2

Number of refugees of less than 18 years and young Guineans of the same age in the affected zones in Forest Guinea (1990)

Prefectures	Refugees of less than 18 years	Guinean population of less than 18 years	% young refugees/ young Guineans
1. Beyla	20 000	62 690	32 %
2. Guéckedou	88 000	76 006	116 %
3. Kissidougou	9 240	74 200	12 %
4. Lola	24 000	39 861	60 %
5. Macenta	51 000	73 992	69 %
6. N'Zérékoré	74 000	101 147	73 %
7. Yomou	20 000	28 523	70 %
TOTAL	286 240	456 419	

Source: UNICEF 1990

Table 3

Evolution of numbers of refugees
(Comparative table 1991-1992-1993-1994-1995)

Prefectures	1991	1992	1993 exclusion of displaced persons	1994 inclusion of new arrivals 93	1994 after verifications	1994 inclusion of new arrivals 94	1995 (15/03/95)
Beyla	32 052	36 756	28 025	27 254	27 254	26 551	26 551
Lola	36 380	41 184	34 975	40 118	24 544	25 508	25 508
Yomou	43 276	50 553	43 343	63 029	59 221	96 342	100 342
N'Zérékoré	118 545	127 955	100 987	102 751	66 588	66 558	66 558
Total East	230 253	256 488	207 330	233 152	177 607	214 959	218 959
Kissidougou	0	9 955	5 308	3 916	3 916	3 916	3 916
Macenta	78 981	93 753	83 239	123 596	116 810	116 810	122 810
Guéckédou	129 937	203 834	182 696	215 606	198 410	216 410	217 910
Total West	208 918	307 542	271 243	343 118	319 136	337 136	344 636
Conakry	0	672	677	677	677	677	695
Forécariah	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Total	439 171	564 662	479 250	576 947	497 420	552 772	614 290

Source: HCR Delegation for Guinea Conakry

B. Children in conflict with the law

99. In the Republic of Guinea, the juridical foundation of all penal action is defined by article 9 of the Basic Law promulgated by decree No 250/PRG/SGG/90 of 31 December which provides:

> "Nobody may be arrested, detained or sentenced except on grounds and in the forms foreseen by the law. All have the imprescriptible right to apply to the judge to assert their rights vis-à-vis the State and its officials.
>
> All have the right to a fair and equitable trial, in which the right to defend themselves is guaranteed. The law establishes the necessary and proportional penalties for the offences that may justify them".

The Guinean Penal Code thus fixes amount of the penalty and the Guinean Code of Penal Procedure defines the procedure to be followed. With the concern to protect children who are juveniles, a specialized jurisdiction for juveniles, namely the children's court, was created by law 022/AL/78.

1. Administration of juvenile justice

100. Three categories of juveniles may be distinguished at the penal level: (a) juveniles under 13 years; (b) juveniles over 13 and under 16 years; and (c) juveniles of 16 to 18 years.

101. Juridical protection of the child is defined by the competence of the children's judge through which actions in favour of children are carried out, especially in the investigation of affairs and judgement of acts committed by juveniles under 16. In the course of his acts of investigation and judgement, the children's judge shall take all measures for the physical, psychological and moral protection of the child in danger.

102. These measures are both of a penal order in regard to juveniles who have committed infractions (offences or crimes) and of a civil order in favour of juveniles whose health, morality and education are compromised by situations threatening their life (family entourage, social life, etc.). In both cases, the children's judge together with the guardianship magistrate shall take measures with the sole objective of protection and rehabilitation of the minor. To this end, the children's judge may order treatment for the protection of the juvenile delinquent who has committed an infraction (theft, breach of trust, fraud, deliberate violence), or a juvenileemerging from a personal family or economic crisis. In this case, the children's judge shall join with the court social welfare services to study the possibilities for his social reintegration.

103. Another measure of protection may be taken at the civil level in particular when a child is in a situation that could compromise his health, education and morality. The judge shall order emergency care to protect the child living in family crisis or in crisis for accommodation. The children's court is confronted with many difficulties in regard to the custody of minors.

2. Treatment of children deprived of freedom

104. When a juvenile is sentenced to a custodial penalty, this is served in a prison. Children should be separated from adults. But in reality, taking into account that no specialized structures of detention exist, juveniles who have been sentenced live in the same conditions as adults.

3. Sentences imposed on juveniles

105. A juvenile of 13 years accused of a crime, offence or petty offence may only be the object of a measure of surveillance, protection, education, reform or welfare guardianship which may seem most appropriate to his case. If prevention is established, before ruling, the court must hear the child, his parents, trustees or guardians, witnesses, the State Prosecutor's Office and his counsel. It orders the child to be handed over either to his family or to the persons responsible for him, taking account of the material situation of the child's family after a severe reprimand of the delinquent. His placement will be ordered until his majority and for a certain number of years in an appropriate rehabilitation centre.

106. In choosing the measure to be taken, the court decides taking account of the age of the minor, his degree of mental development, his inclinations, the motives that have caused him to act, the environment in which he lives or has lived, the seriousness of the offence.

107. A minor of 13 to 16 years charged with crime, and having acted with discernment in the accomplishment of his acts can only see the following penalties applied to him:

(a) Ten years' imprisonment if he incurs the penalty of forced labour in perpetuity;

(b) Five years' imprisonment if he incurs the penalty of forced labour for time or imprisonment. He may also be forbidden to appear for 5 years at least and 10 years at most in certain places after serving his sentence in accordance with the provisions of article 62, last paragraph, of the Penal Code.

108. A minor of 13 to 16 years convicted of an offence, but having acted without discernment, is acquitted, but is immediately handed back either to his parents, or to the persons in their stead, or to an appropriate rehabilitation centre where he remains in detention until his majority or for a certain number of years fixed by the court. If it is decided that he has acted with discernment, the court will impose a penalty which can only be half the maximum to which he could have been sentenced if he had been 18.

109. Faced with the worrying situation of juveniles of 16 years and over, it has proved indispensable to obtain the intervention of a neutral and extrajudicial structure. Thus, since the beginning of 1992, Samaritaine-Guinée has intervened specifically in favour of 250 young people in particularly difficult situations in the country, 25 of whom are ex-prisoners. It has therefore implanted within the prison in Conakry a cell charged with the educational follow-up of the imprisoned juveniles.

110. On these premises, its principal objectives are the following:

(a) To seek promotion of the welfare of these juveniles and to ensure that the reactions of the authorities are in proportion to the nature of the delinquent and the offence, through the interventions of advocates and the benefit of the excuse of minority;

(b) To see that the duration of the detention of juveniles is as short as possible;

(c) To seek logistic resources to separate these juveniles from adults;

(d) To seek financial resources for the training of officers of the judicial police and personnel responsible for prison administration in the country;

(e) To ensure that juveniles enjoy equitable and humane treatment, at trials and during preventive detention;

(f) To serve, as the final objective, as an alternative structure for the imprisonment of juveniles.

111. Since January 1994, it has effectively undertaken and carried out the following actions in favour of juveniles (from 13 to 17 years) imprisoned at Conakry:

(a) Three contradictory surveys to detect the rate of propensity to imprisonment of juveniles in the capital, totalling 54 cases (girls and boys) from October to December 1994;

(b) Literacy courses, community therapy sensitization sessions on the offences committed by each of them and teaching about the content of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(c) The release of 25 juveniles of the 54 cases from January to July 1995;

(d) The provision of food and primary health care to the most impoverished.

However, even with these efforts, the lack of logistic, financial and human resources for the perennial establishment and especially the qualification of these actions still remains a problem.

112. When a juvenile of 16 to 18 years accused of crime is to be judged, the children's court is added to the composition of the court of assizes depending on the circumstances required by the law. Juveniles of 13 to 18 years condemned to prison sentences serve them in prisons foreseen for adults.

113. Whatever the penalty and the duration of this penalty imposed on a juvenile of 18 years, the measures taken against him and the regime then applied to him are instituted with a view to favouring his amendment and preparing his rehabilitation within society.

114. When the alleged offence is a minor police offence, competence is left to the simple police tribunal, even if the offender is a juvenile of 13 years or the offence committed in a state of recidivism.

115. It must be stressed that in the prisons there is no specific accommodation reserved for juveniles. There are also no state structures for rehabilitation and social reintegration of juvenile delinquents. To correct this state of fact, it is planned to build centres for the rehabilitation of young people in conflict with the law as an alternative to prison.

C. Children in situations of exploitation, including their physicaland psychological recovery and social reintegration

1. Economic exploitation, particularly child labour

116. Economic exploitation of children in the strict sense of the term does not yet exist in Guinea. Of the exploitation that may be in question here, we shall only cite three distinct categories which are:

(a) Children of handicapped persons aged 8 to 14 years, essentially girls, who accompany their blind parents to beg through the neighbourhoods, often on their behalf;

(b) Children liable to do household chores, either for their parents or as salaried domestic workers, and the small vendors of cheap goods throughout the city;

(c) Street children working for big traders by selling cheap goods or children sent to learn the Koran with the marabouts. This practice from the traditional point of view is perceived as normal, because contributing to the instruction and education of children from the time of their school age. The same goes for domestic work by children which is considered normal in the context of an economy of benefits and redistribution. It is important to take account of this social perception of the work of children in African societies in general where every member of the community participates within the limits of his capacities to the survival of the family group.

117. With regard to the specific case of children who work in the street - baggage carriers, shoe shiners and others - they work in most cases on their own account and in a field of their choice, which they can change in time as required. They may not receive the just return for the services they render, but this situation derives from the context of an unstructured economy.

118. In these cases of child exploitation, no formal engagement governs the parties in the work in question. In the majority of cases, children have recourse to these activities which do not require any specialization to meet their personal need and that of their family, if they are not employed by it. Whether it be paid work or family chores, it is undeniable that, for there really to be a question of exploitation, there must be formalized jobs (tacit or written contract) in contexts in which the employee does not receive an equitable return for his services.

119. It should be noted that, in Guinea, there are still many weaknesses in the control of effective implementation of labour legislation. Even at the level of the sectors recognized as productive and formalized from all points of view, there is still much to be done for better control of the deployment of labour of all kinds. Everything suggests that it is this unstructured sector of the economy, which helps to absorb unemployment, that is developing.

120. However, real political will exists at all levels of the country, leaving free rein to all initiatives aimed at reversing the trend in this domain. It is in this framework that there are now national and foreign NGOs which initiate or participate in the establishment of children's aid programmes strongly involving the international community in their implementation. These programmes are essentially aimed at promoting education, vocational training, leisure and encouraging the reestablishment of parental ties if these have been broken.

121. The national NGO Samaritaine-Guinée, in particular, is taking steps to sensitize the general public and deciders, from the bottom to the top, to make them aware of the recognition of the rights especially of street children, in whose favour this NGO was created. It more particularly supports integrated projects for the development of solid professions among street children, by training them and informing them of their right to earn the salary they deserve for a given piece of work.

2. Use of drugs

122. For some years, the consumption of drugs has become a serious problem for the young people of the big towns in Guinea, in general, and in the capital Conakry, in particular. The ever increasing frequency of individual cases at the Donka University Hospital psychiatric centre illustrates this alarming situation. In January 1992, there were already 127 drug addicts interned there, representing 60% of the total patients at the centre, which was originally intended to care only for mental patients. These drug addicts are mostly aged between 10 and 18 years.

123. The psychoactive substances consumed are the following, according to the centre's statistics:

- Indian hemp (cannabis) for 35 per cent
- alcohol of all kinds (traditional, industrial) for 25 per cent
- solvents: glue, paint, thinner, etc. for 15 per cent
- psychotropics: diazepam, ephedrine, etc. for 25 per cent

124. The rate of relapse is 30 per cent and it is essentially a function of the economic level of the respective families and the inactivity of which these newly weaned drug addicts are victims, who fall back into promiscuity in the populous neighbourhoods. Hence the necessity for intervention by NGOs in support of Government action to reduce this scourge. Although the psychotherapeutic management of drug addicts is ensured for better or worse by the psychiatric centre, it must regrettably be pointed out that their psychosocial management is wanting. This largely explains the high level of relapse.

125. On the other hand, the poor capacity of the centre and its limited equipment constitute a major difficulty for dealing effectively with a growing number of drug addicts. In practice the centre has only one treatment room for them with 30 beds within a total internment capacity of 65 beds. Ambulatory visits are automatically excluded from the activities of the centre as a matter of course.

126. The appearance of "hard" drugs, such as heroin and cocaine has been noted. Faced with this sad reality, the structures of the Guinean state are engaged in a combat to repress the traffic, production and abusive consumption of psychoactive substances. These structures are the national gendarmerie, the National Directorate of the Vice and Narcotics Squad, the national customs, and the Republican Guard. However, it should be noted that these structures move in a very scattered fashion; this lack of coordination makes the terrain fertile and vulnerable.

127. In 1987, a national Interministerial commission elaborated drafts for a set of legislative texts to combat this scourge with a view to its eradication. So far, there is a national drugs control committee and technical working commissions. Efforts are being made by the Government: there are principal administrators of drug repression, training of trainers, integration or reintegration of victims, as well as secondary and sectoral administrators among officials in health, education and social affairs. A national master plan for drugs control is also being prepared. In spite of the creation in 1987 of this national Interministerial commission to elaborate legislative texts with a view to eradication of the drugs scourge, no official or juridical document links these agencies or institutions together. Clearly, efforts still have to be made in the domain of coordination to make control more effective. The weakness of the statistical system in the matter and the lack of specialists, in spite of the ratification by the Guinean government of all international conventions on psychoactive substances, constitute the weak points in control of the production, transit, traffic and consumption of drugs and psychotropic substances.

128. The most obvious effects of drug addiction in the country and especially in the capital, Contakry, are the increase in crime, thefts of all kinds, rape and the rising numbers of drug addicts at the Donka psychiatric centre.

129. The groups at risk comprise:

(a) Pupils and students;

(b) Children marginalized by the economic crisis or, even more so, by frequent dislocation of the family in the urban area;

(c) Children imprisoned with alcoholic or drug addicted adults;

(d) Street children, workers with no fixed address left to themselves on the market, and those leaving rural centres to go to the big cities without attachment in those places.

130. As well as the Health and Interior Ministry and security specialists, national NGOs are making praiseworthy efforts in the field in primary, secondary

and tertiary prevention. Thus, Samaritaine-Guinée is ensuring the management of street children of no fixed abode through apprenticeship to various occupations. AGRETO, for its part, is taking care of prevention in the matter of drug control through actions to raise awareness and education of the people.

3. Sexual exploitation and sexual violence

131. More and more, girls are becoming sources of revenue for their family by prostituting themselves. This situation is progressively affecting female juveniles, themselves confronted with great socioeconomic difficulties.

132. It is now common to see parents sacrificing their young daughter in a marriage of interest often for the survival of the family. Thus, early marriages still persist, especially in the rural areas. Similarly, many matrimonial unions do not take place before the civil registrar, which facilitates divorces and other conjugal instabilities, especially in the towns. This also leads to non-respect of the legal age for marriage which is 18 years for men and 17 years for women.

133. This altogether recent situation in Guinea, - apart from early marriage, which is merely the social reaction to economic circumstances - has direct consequences for girls whose dignity and harmonious development are quite often compromised. The principal factors which have led to this situation are:

(a) Rural exodus;

(b) The creation of periurban zones of poverty;

(c) The slimming down of the civil service, leaving hundreds of fathers and mothers of families without work, thus without resources to keep their families. This has played a large part in weakening parental authority and destabilizing families economically and socially;

(d) The reduction of State subsidies, seriously affecting the social domain in general and that of health in particular, thus making access to health care very difficult.

(e) The liberalization of trade, leaving the ground free for commodity prices to soar, while households do not have sufficient income;

134. The principal forms of violence (rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment) are punished by articles 264, 265, 281 and following of the Penal Code.

VI. EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

135. Recognized as especially fragile and vulnerable and as a being with variable needs depending on age, the child is the most precious asset of our society. The blossoming of the child is a function of the socioeconomic development of his environment. The right to education, leisure and other activities will easily be respected if society has sufficient material and financial resources to guarantee the realization of this right.

A. Education

136. The right to education is certainly one of those that best favours the blossoming of the child and his social integration. Education covers action in the family as well as school through that of institutions of social training and supervision. Until 1984, the State assured this role exclusively. But with the advent of the Second Republic, the Basic Law defines the role of parents and the State in the education of children (art. 16, para. 2).

1. Pre-school education

137. This education, not widely known in Guinea, was done during the First Republic, by religious institutions. After the Second Republic, with the liberalization of private initiatives, pre-school establishments were born.

138. The education of small children is felt by parents and teacners to be imperative for passage to elementary school. In this spirit, the State, with the help of private promoters, is trying to dynamize this sector more. Pre-school education consists essentially of crèches (from 0 to 3 years), kindergartens (from 3 to 4 years) and nursery schools (from 4 to 6 years).

139. In 1990, there were twenty nursery schools; since then, pre-school educationhas seen an important development: one hundred nursery schools on average were created in the years 1994 and 1995. It must be pointed out nevertheless that these schools and crèches do not all meet the standards and requirements of pre-school education. Faced with this reality, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children held in the month of June 1995, the States General on pre-school education to regulate conditions of creation and functioning of establishments in this sector.*

2. Primary education

140. Article 21 of the Basic Law prescribes that the State must ensure compulsory education of children. The State must create the conditions and institutions enabling each child, without any discrimination, to be educated and guarantee freedom of education by controlling the private schools.

141. A diagnosis of the Guinean educational system made after 3 April 1984 brought to light the following gaps and inadequacies:

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* The reader will find additional information on pre-school education in sub-section 2 of section D "Social security and child care services" of chapter VI (paras. 224 to 232).

Table 4

Indicators	School years			
	1990/1991	1991/1992	1992/1993	1993/1994
Crude rates of global school enrolment	31.80	31.96	36.53	40.14
Crude rate of school enrolment of girls	19.37	19.60	23.06	25.71
Global rate of abandonment	39.42	34.82	47.67	54.72
Rate of abandonment of girls	23.24	23.30	31.08	36.00
Rate of abandonment of boys		46.70	65.48	66.59
Rate of reduplication	21.90	20.40	24.20	21.85
Rate of non school attendance	21.00	24.40	29.00	37.00

Source: Ministry of Pre-University Education and Vocational Training (1994)

142. Enjoyment of the right to education was strongly compromised by the non-performance of the system. To improve this situation, the Ministry of Pre-University Education and Vocational Training has elaborated a new educational policy which was adopted by decree No 174 of 27 September 1989. In 1990, Guinea conceived a long term plan of action covering the period 1991 - 1999. This sectoral adjustment programme for education has enabled perceptible progress to be made. The budget for education has evolved from 2.9 per cent in 1989 to 15 per cent in 1990 and 19.2 per cent in 1991.

143. In recent years, private initiative (urban and village communities, parent-teacher associations (PTA) and religious congregations) has made it possible to increase overall effort in favour of education from 3.7 thousand million Guinean francs in 1987 to 8.4 thousand million francs in 1988. Several other donors also contribute to the development of this educational sector. A substantial expansion in private education is occurring from nursery education to vocational training centres.

3. Other educational activities in favour of the child

144. In spite of these various activities, certain inadequacies still persist and restrict full enjoyment by the Guinean child of his full right to education. To further stimulate education, various activities have been undertaken in several fields to permit better integration of the child.

(a) Parent-teacher associations

145. Raising of awareness and involvement of families has been encouraged by the establishment of parent-teacher and friends of schools associations. The main role of these associations is to ensure links between teaching staff and

parents in the first case, and between local authorities and schools in the second.

(b) "Children for children" programme

146. This programme has enabled children in experimental classes to acquire new knowledge, skills and behaviours in regard to the main problems of health. These children help each other, help younger children and give wise advice to their parents who have not had the benefit of this experience. They take part in raising the awareness of citizens and their communities.

(c) NAFA centres

147. Basic education as it exists in Guinea is not able to cater for the basic educational needs of all. Special attention has thus been accorded to all young people of ten to sixteen years of age who have not had access to formal schooling or who have been excluded for one reason or another. The NAFA centres (charity) aim to give this disadvantaged group the chance to acquire knowledge, reasoning ability and savoir-faire to cope for themselves and participate in community development.

(d) Education on population

148. The project GUI/90/PO2 entitled "Education on population" (EMP) launched in 1989 has been tried out in 43 elementary schools. This project aims to develop in children responsible skills and behaviour in regard to population and social problems (rapid population growth, rural exodus, juvenile delinquency, sexuality ...). Up to 1994, the following activities were or were being carried out:

(a) Institutionalization of population education in elementary education and its extension to 26 new schools;

(b) Definition of modalities of curriculum reform and introduction of EMP to the biology, French and geography programmes in five secondary schools and the foundation training in two teacher training colleges;

(c) Continuation of awareness raising by the media;

(d) Definition of strategy for the training of teachers in EMP;

(e) Survey of the impact of EMP in the schools.

(e) The "Clean schools - Green schools" project

149. This project tried experimentally in eight elementary schools in Conakry, the capital, aims to encourage the development of awareness by all young people of the problems posed to man, in particular, by the degradation of the environment. It is also directed towards information and civic education of young people to prepare them to take responsibility for environmental problems and predispose them to act distinctly to protect the environment. Activities carried out in this domain include:

(a) Elaboration, trial and evaluation of a programme of environmental education for the teacher training college in Conakry;

(b) Trial of the programme in 65 classes with a total of 12 345 pupils;

(c) Elaboration of a guide to environmental education at the request of UNESCO;

(d) Creation of an ecological bulletin "Clean Schools - Green Schools";

(e) Trial of the programme in 20 schools in the interior of the country.

(f) Technical and manual training

150. Instituted by circular No 1824/MEN/SEEPUA of 7 October 1991, this programme is intended to introduce scientific and practical content to elementary school curricula to enlarge the technical knowledge and practical skills of children. This programme also promotes their social and economic integration.

(g) Education on the principles and ideals of the Red Cross

151. This project, instituted by circular No 1108/MEPU-FP/CAB of 29 July 1994 and tried out in eleven primary schools, aims to:

(a) Promote a spirit of tolerance and peace among young people;

(b) Make children aware of the many forms of human suffering with a view to finding solutions to the problems occurring in the school environment and in the community;

(c) Give every child the opportunity:

(i) to acquire a basic knowledge anbd understanding of the humanitarian principles of the Red Cross;

(ii) to nurture a sense of responsibility and solidarity towards all humanity;

(iii) to develop skills in diffusion for the social benefit of the whole of society.

152. To ensure the success of the trials, a follow-up committee comprising researchers in education and officials of the Guinean Red Cross was set up by circular No 1201/MEPU/FP/CAB of 30 July 1993. Since then, different activities have been carried out, including the preparation of a programme of study and a study guide, and the training of 40 experimenters, 11 primary school heads and 10 coordinators (directors of studies in elementary schools), in the selected prefectoral directorates of education and communal directorates of education.

4. Secondary education

153. Secondary education is given in colleges and high schools (lycées). College has become compulsory for all pupils who have successfully completed primary school. It has four levels, the 7th year, 8th year, 9th year and 10th year which is the class in which the equivalent of the GCSE examination is taken for access to high school. High school which is the second stage in secondary education takes pupils who have successfully completed their college schooling. It is the decisive stage offering the pupils tracks enabling them to acquire a general education leading to further pursuit of their studies and access to professional life. It has three levels, the 11th year, 12th year and final year with three options: social sciences, experimental sciences and mathematical sciences.

Table 5

	Colleges			High schools			Total		
Number of establishments	182			58			240		
Number of classes	1 465			468			1 933		
Number of pupils	G	B	T	G	B	T	G	B	T
	20 410	62 427	82 837	4 363	17 844	22 207	24 773	80 271	105 044
Number of teaching staff	3 438			-			4 234		
Number of non-teaching staff	796								

5. Constraints and perspectives

(a) Present constraints

154. At the pre-school level mention may be made in particular of the inadequacy of infrastructures, teaching and play materials, and the inadequacy of the training of nursery school supervisors.

155. At the primary level, in spite of the efforts made, gaps, inadequacies and distortions still remain in several fields. Thus there is disparity between the regions in the matter of equality between the sexes in access to education (26.71% in Middle Guinea as compared with 72.7% in Conakry). These disparities result essentially from poor distribution of infrastructures and human resources between the urban and rural areas and differences in parents' motivation.

156. In spite of the intervention of the sectoral adjustment programme in education, NGOs and private initiatives, the lack of infrastructure is still a matter of concern, especially in the urban centres and in the chief towns of certain sub-prefectures. The two shift system is still very common practice;

where it is not in use, class numbers are often very large, which affects the quality of teaching. There are some mixed level classes. These are not all equipped and the teachers in charge of them have not all received appropriate training. These renovated classrooms may offer some kind of solution to the inadequacy of the premises. The lack of textbooks adapted to the school curricula is also a major difficulty: the pupil/textbook ratio is on average 2.20 in Conakry, 1.37 in Labé, 1.49 in Kankan and 0.77 in N'Zérékoré.

157. Secondary education is today confronted with some real problems connected with the ever increasing number of pupils. These are insufficient infrastructures, furniture and equipment, an absence of laboratories, lack of adequate school textbooks and insufficient teaching staff in the basic disciplines.

(b) Future perspectives

158. The Ministry of Pre-University Education and Vocational Training and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children have set the objective of achieving a first year admission rate of 70% and a school enrolment rate of 60% by the year 2000. To this end the following measures are envisaged:

(a) Strengthen the quality of elementary education in order to reduce losses;

(b) Extend mixed level classes to all schools with one or two classes (ensure the classrooms identified are equipped and the teachers working there are trained);

(c) Improve first year recruitment to teacher training colleges and revise the course. The level of recruitment will be the equivalent of GCSE and duration of training will be four years;

(d) Ensure training of head teachers who play a strategic role in an extended and complex environment involving pupils, teachers, parents, socioeconomic promoters and authorities;

(e) Actualize the classroom working conditions of teachers, nursery supervisors and pupils by building and equipping infrastructures;

(f) Take children from the disadvantaged areas with high rates of school attendance and retention;

(g) Encourage facilitators in informal centres of education;

(h) Build regional kindergartens;

(i) Develop provision corresponding to the needs and conditions of our populations while at the same time stimulating demand for education;

(j) Build and renovate certain secondary schools;

(k) Provide schools with adequate furniture and sufficient school textbooks;

(l) Ensure continuing training of teachers;

(m) Recruit teachers of mathematics, physics and French.

B. Leisure, recreational and cultural activities

159. The organization of leisure and other recreational activities is not yet the object of legal and regulatory provisions. However, certain State institutions, in particular the Ministry of Youth, Art and Sport, through its decentralized services, organize activities for young people throughout the national territory. Youth associations are also concerned with organizing leisure, the practice of sports, theatre, holiday camps, discoveries, youth camps and children's villages. They are active in the urban areas and contribute greatly to the organization, animation and management of youth clubs, and the promotion of many socio-educational activities. During the festivities marking the International Day of the Child, on 1 June 1990, the Government declared that the whole of the month of June would be the "Month of the Guinean child".

160. Activities are also organized in the framework of advocacy and survival of children in Guinea in collaboration with UNICEF and the national institutions responsible for the supervision of children. We give a non-exhaustive list of these activities.

(a) Round table with donors, the Guinean Government and UNICEF;

(b) Advocacy through the press and support from the media to increase the awareness of the population of questions relating to the survival and development of the child; radio and television spots;

(c) Seminar of the National League for the Rights of the Child;

(d) Song and art competitions on the theme of the child;

(e) Promotional poster campaign (breast feeding, education, hygiene, drinking water);

(f) Brochure "Portrait of the Guinean child"; leaflet on the national plan of action and the intermediate plan of action;

(g) Rural radio team for the children's programme; rural radio campaign on the Finnish project on the environment in favour of the child; micro-programmes during rural radio broadcasts;

(h) Issue of children's greetings cards;

(i) Organization of camps and holiday camps; and organization of sports fixtures, from the nursery schools to the colleges;

(j) Broadcasting of radio and television programmes "Children's corner" and "Children to children".

161. With private initiatives, some leisure centres are coming into being in different parts of the country. Among others we will mention: the 2 October Park (public park), the Tassana Leisure Centre, the Taddi-club Sports and Leisure Centre, the youth clubs (Kénien, Matam, Timbi-Madina, etc.) and the Tougnifili Leisure Centre (Boffa Prefecture).

Constraints and perspectives

(a) Present constraints

162. The difficulties are innumerable, for without the intervention of private initiatives, there would be only one kindergarten in the capital. These difficulties can be summarized as a lack of centres for rehabilitation and leisure, insufficient play areas which are not foreseen in urban planning, insufficient sports infrastructures and facilities, no public swimming pools, and the inability of some parents to pay the fees for holiday camps.

(b) Future perspectives

163. Several activities are planned in the framework of improvement of leisure: building of more leisure centres for all children; building of a centre for rehabilitation and leisure in every Governorate; reduction of the fees for participation in holiday camps so that parents who are poor can send their children; organization of fairs and fêtes for children and the establishment of a library specializing in children's literature.

VII. HEALTH AND WELFARE

A. Survival and development

164. It is useful to recall that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international standard that is binding for signatory States. But implementation of this standard comes up against the enormous complexity of the concrete realities of nations such as, inter alia, ethnic particularisms and cultural diversity, the scarcity of financial resources in the developing countries, natural resistance to change, etc. These factors, whether endogenous or exogenous, mean that implementation of the provisions of the Convention is somewhat relative and variable depending on the country.

165. The Republic of Guinea has always been concerned to protect the social groups lacking resources for self-development and self-protection: consisting mainly of children, handicapped and elderly people, these groups have always been the beneficiaries of important social measures favouring their survival, protection and personal development.

166. Guinea has gone through all the stages of structural adjustment. From 1985 on, the IMF and the World Bank supported a vast programme of economic and financial reform to cover the period 1986-1988. This led to a market economy through the disengagement of the State from the production sectors, strengthening of the regulatory and institutional environment and promotion of the private sector. In parallel, a public investment programme was adopted and gives emphasis to infrastructure and rural development. Two other economic and

financial reform programmes were adopted in the years 1989-1991 and 1991-1994: their social consequences proved to be very tough, resulting in unemployment, rural exodus and degradation of basic services (health, education). The Government was compelled to increase investments in the social sector: credits were released for education and health and allocated expenditure rose from 20.2 per cent in 1991 to 28.8 per cent in 1992.

167. In health, the advances are well known: the Bamako Initiative, based on community participation, was gradually extended to the whole country; it contributes actively to the survival of populations, particularly children through the expanded programme of immunization. In 1987, the authorities launched the national programme of primary health care.

168. From the education point of view, national education policy and the Government's strategies in the perpsective of education for all by the year 2000 serve as the document of reference. The plan of basic education for all, adopted in 1991, pursues its objectives in conformity with those of the World Summit for Children.

169. With regard to responsibility for children, the Secretariat of State for Social Affairs in the Promotion of Women and Children was upgraded, in 1994, to the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children. This Ministry has set up a committee to monitor the protection of the rights of children and has submitted to the Government, for adoption, a draft national policy on children.

170. Through this balance of actions, the Government's efforts and determination to ensure healthy development for its most vulnerable populations are evident. The national programme of action for implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, is fully in line with it.

B. Health and health services

1. Basic health data

171. The health situation of children is characterized by very high rates of infant mortality (136 per 1000) and child mortality (108 per 1000) notwithstanding the progress achieved by the expanded programme of immunization and the programmes to combat malnutrition, diarrhoeal diseases and the communicable diseases of childhood. The fundamental objective of the Government's social health policy is to improve the health of the whole population by reducing morbidity and mortality, in particular that of the most vulnerable groups.

172. Since Guinea has limited resources to attain the objectives it has set itself within a reasonable period of time, a basic line of this policy is to give priority to certain fields of action, in particular maternal and child health, including family planning.

173. A substantial proportion of deaths among children of 0 to 5 years is attributable to diseases that can be controlled by low cost interventions. Protein-calorie under-nutrition is chronically present among 40 per cent of children under 5 and acute in 2 per cent of children in this age group. One

child in three is affected by deficiency anaemia which appears to be present in moderate or severe forms in 30 per cent of pregnant women seen in antenatal consultations.

174. Among children under 5, the main causes of morbidity and mortality are malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections, intestinal parasitoses, malnutrition and anaemias. These diseases constitute the main reasons for outpatient consultations: malaria (31 per cent), respiratory infections (23 per cent) helminthiases (16 per cent), diarrhoeal diseases (14 per cent), acute malnutrition (11.5 per cent) and chronic malnutrition (31.6 per cent).

2. Health services

(a) The primary health care programme

175. In view of the many health problems, children are covered at all levels of the national health system in force whose policy is based on the primary health care programme. One of the main characteristics of this programme is the multisectoral approach in place, but above all the direct involvement of communities in the financing of primary health care (construction or renovation of structures, furnishing, payment for curative care) and the financial management of health centres.

176. This programme takes up the principal recommendations of the Bamako Initiative at the national level:

(a) Acceleration of the implementation of primary health care at the district level giving priority to women and children;

(b) Establishment of a system of community financing mainly founded on the supply and sale of essential drugs, permitting a cost recovery system;

(c) Substantial decentralization of decision-making to the district level through the management of primary health care at the community level.

177. Since then, the objectives pursued by the programme have been:

(a) To ensure provision of preventive pre- and post-natal services to mothers and children, and in particular immunization;

(b) To ensure the self-financing of the health centres in the sub-prefectures;

(c) To set up a system of health information;

(d) To set up a system of epidemiological surveillance in the sub-prefectures and sentinel villages.

178. The primary health care programme is responsible for various activities focused on promotion and prevention, of which we may mention surveillance of pregnant women, childbirth including family planning, nutritional surveillance

of children, primary curative consultations and care, the provision of essential drugs, and administration and management.

(b) Structure and functioning of health facilities

179. The Ministry of Health theoretical standards for infrastructure foresee:

(a) A health post for a population of 600 to 1500 when this population is more than 10 km from a health centre;

(b) A health centre for 10 000 to 20 000 inhabitants;

(c) A prefectoral hospital in the chief town of every prefecture;

(d) A community hospital for each of the urban communes of Conakry and in the highly populated rural communes situated at a distance from any referral structures or where access to them is difficult; these are improved health centres with an operating theatre and hospital beds;

(e) A hospital in every regional capital.

180. At present, health facilities in Guinea consist of two University hospitals in Conakry, seven regional hospitals (at Mamou, Boké, Faranah, Kankan, Labé, Kindia and N'Zérékoré), three company hospitals (at Fria, Kamsar and Gbenko), 370 health centres, one faculty of medicine and three schools of nursing/technical health workers.

181. Public health care services are provided by a pyramidal structure of establishments also based on the administrative divisions. The University hospitals represent the top of the health care pyramid. In addition to the services offered by the regional hospitals, the University hospitals provide all specialized services and contribute to University training and health research. In every region there is a general inspectorate of health which ensures the supervision, coordination and evaluation of the health services at the regional level. In every prefecture, the Prefectoral Health Directorate plans, coordinates and supervises health activities in the prefecture. In every prefecture there is a prefectoral hospital. Regional hospitals are located in the capital of the region; they fulfill all the missions of the prefectoral hospitals. In principle, they also provide specialized care: ENT, ophthalmology, pneumology, gastroenterology and traumatology; but some do not have these services.

182. In each sub-prefecture, the health centres and health posts are the levels of first contact. Their activities are, in particular, maternal and child health and family planning, immunization, nutritional surveillance, hygiene and sanitation, prenatal consultations, deliveries, routine care, provision of essential drugs and health education, and management. In the functional health centres there is system of cost recovery based on the sale of essential drugs: flat rates are charged and the revenue is used to cover running costs (wages and bonuses of health workers).

183. Health centre teams comprise the head of the centre (a doctor or more often a nurse), paramedical workers (nurse, midwife, public health technician,

laboratory technician, technical health worker) and village health workers (traditional birth attendants). Administration of centres is carried out by a management committee with four members which is also responsible for raising the awareness of the population and involving it in health and social activities (see also para. 191).

(c) Procurement and distribution of drugs

184. Since 1988 the Government has authorized the importation and distribution of generic drugs for the public sector. This authorization was extended to the private sector in 1990. For the public sector, a national list of essential drugs by level of health facility was adopted in 1989 and revised in 1991. Supply is ensured by a mechanism established by each project and programme or by the Central Pharmacy of Guinea. An essential drugs cell supported by WHO and UNICEF supplies all the functional health centres on the basis of a standard list of 33 drugs whose distribution favours cost recovery at the health centres. This cell has been working for five years and will soon be transferred to the Central Pharmacy of Guinea (formerly Pharmaguinée), the main supplier of the hospitals, particularly those not supported by a cooperation agency or NGO.

185. In the private sector, private wholesale distributors deliver drugs to the private dispensaries under brand names, which limits their financial accessibility for the vast majority of the Guinean population.

3. Resources for the health services

(a) Human resources

186. The total staff of the Ministry of Health numbers 8051. 63.3 per cent of the midwives are in Conakry, which affects the quality of maternal and infant care in the rural areas where there are great difficulties with personnel, in spite of the use of alternative personnel who do not have the right training for these activities. Every prefectoral hospital has at least one dental technician. 59 per cent of laboratory technicians are in Conakry, thus reducing the quality of diagnoses in the peripheral structures.

187. A redeployment has been under way since 1990 with the support of the World Bank. Analysis of overall national numbers of personnel presents a favourable situation, but the regional disparities are great; only Lower Guinea is favoured.

188. The performance of staff is also limited by the under-equipment of health facilities, little basic training of workers, insufficiency of teaching material (lack of libraries, journals and books), absence of a policy and programme for continuing training and little motivation on the part of workers.

(b) Financial resources

189. The financial resources of the health services come from four sources: (i) the State, (ii) communities and households, (iii) local authorities (districts, communes, prefectures) and (iv) external aid.

(i) Financing by the State

190. The most striking feature of the current health budget is the overall importance of the wages component: the share of wages and running costs rose from 60.9 per cent in 1989 to 83.6 per cent in 1991, and then 87.3 per cent in 1992. This upward trend can be explained by the recruitment of 1000 civil servants in 1991 and by the fact that the nominal amount of wages and salaries, including those of the health sector, was approximately doubled in 1991. Which automatically brought down the pharmaceuticals, maintenance and materials components.

(ii) Community participation

191. The participation of the population in the financing of drugs is important in the health centres where a system of charging is in use. The provision of health services is paid for by the population on the basis of a list of charges. The revenue generated is used to cover the renewal of drugs and the non-salary running costs of the health centre in accordance with the principles of the Bamako Initiative. The charges are affordable and do not constitute a barrier to access to services for most of the population. The funds generated by this cost recovery system are managed by elected members of the community constituting a management committee for the health centre (see para. 183).

(iii) Participation of local authorities

192. Local authorities (prefectures, communes) share in responsibility for part of the costs of the health services, either by paying the wages of contractual staff, or by providing for the building or maintenance or health infrastructures. The amount of this share is not known exactly.

(iv) External aid

193. The main donors/funding agencies for the health sector are: WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank, EEC, ADB, IDB, bilateral cooperation agencies (German GTZ, French Cooperation, USAID, Saudi Fund). Several NGOs have played an active part since 1986 in the implementation of the primary health care programme. These include Médecins sans Frontières, MEDICUS, CESTAS, the French Agency of Volunteers for Progress (AFVP), the Guinean Family Welfare Association (AGBEF), CERAK Santé, Pharmaciens sans Frontières, Raoul Follereau Foundation, Mission Philafricaine, Order of Malta, etc.

4. Traditional Medicine

(a) The problem

194. For reasons of cost, geographical accessibility and culture, a substantial part of the Guinean population continues to have recourse to traditional medicine both in the rural and urban areas (estimated at 60-70%). Traditional medicine is thus practised in a context of isolation and marginality without the collaboration of the official health services. To counter this trend and cope with the difficulties of providing effective health care in the short term to all communities, the Guinean Government has undertaken to integrate the

activities of traditional practitioners into the national health system, with a view to their participation in the promotion of primary health care.

(b) Progress achieved

195. The various activities that have been carried out are as follows:

(a) Elaboration of organic texts defining the tasks devolved to health officials at all levels in the structure;

(b) Elaboration of regulatory texts relating to the practice of traditional medicine;

(c) Elaboration of the declaration on traditional medicine;

(d) Organization of ethnotherapeutic surveys among traditional practitioners in Maritime and Forest Guinea;

(e) Preparation of an album of the chief medicinal plants of Maritime and Forest Guinea;

(f) Conduct jointly with ORSTOM of a survey on traditional therapies for diseases of fertility;

(g) Development by a private sector pharmacist of a plant-based cough mixture based on *Dissortis rotundifolia*;

(h) Production and dissemination of a scientific information bulletin "Medicine of our Ancestors".

(c) Constraints and difficulties

196. Encouraging traditional medicine meets with certain difficulties, including:

(a) Little collaboration between health personnel at the grassroots and traditional practitioners, for lack of motivation and adequate training;

(b) Absence of the central level at the intermediate and peripheral levels through lack of specialized training in certain areas such as computer programming and medical anthropology;

(c) Lack of an institution to support research and training in traditional medicine;

(d) Absence of any incentive mechanism for local production of plant-based pharmaceutical specialties from the traditional pharmacopoeia, although pharmacological studies have demonstrated the therapeutic efficacy and safety of many of them.

(d) Objectives pursued

197. The following objectives have been set for the years 1994-1996:

(a) Develop collaboration with traditional practitioners at the grassroots;

(b) Adapt training in institutions of higher education and vocational training;

(c) Promote research on traditional medicine and medicinal plants;

(d) Promote local development of plant-based pharmaceutical specialties.

(e) Strategy

198. In order to integrate the activities of traditional practitioners into the national health system, the following strategy has been developed:

(a) Training of the managers and workers of health posts and health centres with regard to traditional medicine;

(b) Establishment of a framework for concertation and dialogue;

(c) Strengthening and management of the central level;

(d) Introduction into the curricula of higher education and vocational training of modules on traditional medicine and pharmacopoeia;

(e) Organization of preclinical and ethnobotanical surveys;

(f) Raising of awareness among university staff and scientific associations,

(g) Creation of a national traditional medicine centre;

(h) Establishment of an incentive scheme.

5. Constraints and difficulties of the health system

199. Although great efforts are being made to improve the health status of children, the problem of the health of the Guinean child remains bound up with the difficulties of the health system as a whole. With little decentralization to the operational level of the process of planning health programmes it is difficult to define priorities correctly and involve intermediate and peripheral structures in their execution (from the management point of view). The management of health centres (execution of budget follow-up) is one of the major problems at the peripheral level. The use made of the services offered by centres remains very limited, in spite of their accessibility in certain places, because of certain sociocultural considerations. An evaluation of the expanded programme of immunization and the primary health care programme by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has confirmed this truth and insists on recourse to activities of information, education and communication.

200. In the hospitals, community participation is insufficient. Hospital boards exist only in certain hospitals; and at this level, the poor representation of the community and the absence of legal and administrative texts mean that those boards will not be able to achieve the performance expected of them.

201. The present distribution of health personnel favours the urban areas to the detriment of the rural areas. The absence of continuing education limits improvement of performance by health personnel. The lack of sufficient infrastructures and adequate equipment, in particular the lack of support to certain hospitals, limits their ability to play an effective role as referral centres. There is incomplete decentralization of structures to the intermediate and peripheral levels not yet having sufficient material and human resources. Regular supply of drugs poses problems of availability when required at the different levels of use. Breaks in health centre stocks are frequent.

C. Standard of living

1. Nutritional status

202. Recent studies, although limited, show that malnutrition of children is a major problem. A survey of household consumption in Conakry in May 1992 revealed that 18 per cent of children under 5 suffer from chronic malnutrition, and 12.9 per cent from acute malnutrition, which is very pronounced in children under 2. Diarrhoea and acute malnutrition are undeniably linked. Chronic malnutrition reflects deficiencies in the weaning of children between 1 and 5.

203. In the rural areas, this percentage is 34.3 per cent as compared with 23.5 per cent in the urban areas. The worst affected regions are Upper Guinea with 45.1 per cent and Forest Guinea with 45 per cent; in Middle Guinea the percentage is 25.3 per cent and in Lower Guinea 24.8 per cent. The nutritional status and health of women have an influence on the low weight of babies at birth. An assessment carried out in 1984 in 15 maternity units in the country revealed that 25 per cent of newborns weighed less than 2500 gr. The causes of this situation are various: poor weaning practices, iodine deficiencies, unbalanced dietary practices, nutritional taboos. Breast feeding is practised by 85 per cent of mothers; unfortunately, weaning is badly managed and too late in the rural areas. Iodine deficiency is another factor of malnutrition. In Middle Guinea, surveys carried out in samples of 911 women and 906 children showed that 10 per cent of mothers and 20 per cent of children had goitre; the other regions are also affected by iodine deficiency, particularly Upper Guinea and Forest Guinea.

204. In addition to this, there is veritable food insecurity connected with purchasing power and low agricultural productivity. One meal a day, both in the towns and the rural areas, is very often the reality for Guinean families. This meal consists essentially of a cereal, completed with "sauces" based on vegetables, groundnuts or leaves depending on the family's resources; this "sauce" is enriched with animal proteins or oil.

2. Food production

205. In spite of favourable natural conditions, and although agricultural potential is not insignificant and 80 per cent of the population work in agriculture, Guinea has not yet achieved self-sufficiency in food. The food deficit is growing, taking into account conditions of production and labour techniques.

206. Cereals such as rice, maize, millet, fonio and tubers (yams, cassava, sweet potatoes and taro) form the staple diet. Rice had a deficit of 84 500 tonnes in 1983; this will rise to 436 000 tonnes in 2008. In fact this figure is already out of date, for Guinean imports show a level of 500 000 tonnes today.

207. Animal husbandry in Guinea has assets for development and expansion among which we may mention the climate, areas of land available for development, and potential water resources for the cultivation, storage and production of animal feedstuffs. In spite of all this potential, the raising of both large and small livestock still remains precarious.

208. Milk and its derivatives are products that are mostly imported. The beginnings of industrial poultry farming found in the urban centres are only for eggs and table chickens. Artisanal poultry raising is purely domestic. Average consumption per capita is 6.53 kg of meat. Fish production in 1991 was estimated at 45 000 tonnes with an average per capita consumption of 7.4 kg.

3. Improvement of food security

209. The essential objective is to reduce the food deficit, improve the diet and nutritional level of populations in general, by increasing farm productivity and diversifying diet. Sufficient food and good nutrition being essential components of health, the Guinean Government envisages adopting the following strategies to attain this objective:

(a) Intensify cereal growing and develop glyceride lines;

(b) Adopt a pricing policy with incentives for producers;

(c) Promote incentive-based rural development;

(d) Diversify the dietary regimes of populations, in particular to reduce dependency on rice and improve nutritional status;

(e) Improve farming methods and technology;

(f) Improve the packaging and storage of produce, and road infrastructures with a view to facilitating the distribution of products;

(g) Set up a farm credit system;

(h) Strengthen the permanent system of agricultural statistics.

For all these strategies, the team responsible for elaborating the sectoral plan of action has identified nine activities mostly requiring physical investments, which, although indispensable, fall within the area of competence of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry rather than that of the organ responsible for population policy.

210. The team that drew up the sectoral plan, the Directorate of the Plan and the Economy and the technical team of the project have agreed on the five activities that follow, the total cost of which is estimated at 15 456 487 United States dollars:

(a) Creation of fifteen cereal banks;

(b) Activities of information, education and communication concerning diversification of diet based on local products;

(c) Development of foods for weaning;

(d) Training in nutritional dietetics of 336 rural women facilitators;

(e) Strengthening of the drinking water supply programme.

4. Water supply and sanitation

211. In order to improve the supply of drinking water to rural populations, the Guinean Government in 1979 launched a "wells" programme in the Water Resources Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Forestry.

212. At that time, the supply of water to rural populations, including the big centres, was essentially ensured by traditional wells dug by seasoned diggers, some of which might go on for more than ten years. However, these wells do not go deep into the water table and generally dry up in the dry season. There were also natural springs, but they were poorly protected and vulnerable to pollution.

213. At the same time, the foundations of sectoral policy were laid in 1980 with the Water Supply and Sanitation Planning Study carried out in the framework of the WHO/World Bank cooperative programme:

(a) Everything has still to be done for water supply to the rural sector;

(b) The objective of 10 l/day per capita for 55 per cent of the rural population which was to have attained by 1995 requires 6100 modern wells;

(c) The objective of 10 l/day per capita for the entire population would require the drilling of 11 000 modern wells.

At the same time, the interest of setting up a drilling unit to strengthen the possibility of intervention in village water supply was considered; it was concluded that it was impossible to attain the objectives for 1995 without drilling boreholes which were the only way that water could be supplied in accordance with needs, under proper economic conditions.

214. On 19 January 1980, the National Wells Development Service (SNAPE) was officially created with responsibility for promoting the development of village water supply. In February 1990, it was raised to the status of a public service of a technical and social nature.

215. In its interim national recovery programme for the period 1985-1987, the Guinean Government defined a new hierarchy in its objectives for village water supply:

(a) First objective: 10 l/day per capita in all villages of more than 300 inhabitants more than 500 m from a modern well and all villages of more than 100 inhabitants situated at a distance of more than 1000 m from a modern well;

(b) Second objective: same criteria, but extending to villages with less than 100 inhabitants;

(c) Third objective: 20 l/day per capita to be supplied by wells situated less than 500 m from users.

The Government nevertheless deemed it more reasonable to maintain 1995 as the horizon for the first objective of 1980-1985, that is, the provision of at least 10 l/day drinking water to about 55 per cent of the rural population. It should be remembered that in 1983, the population of Guinea was evaluated at 5.35. million inhabitants with 78 per cent in the rural area. Projection for 1995 pointed to a population of 7 million with 75 per cent in the rural area.

216. The maintenance of rural wells was first of all made the responsibility of SNAPE which soon realised the danger of such a centralized system in the perspective of the new wells planned, which were generally fitted with humanly activated pumps. As from 1984, therefore, SNAPE ensured adoption of the principle of well maintenance by beneficiaries on the basis of a three-level system: (a) village water committees; (b) independent repair craftsmen intervening at the request of a committee and paid by it and the beneficiaries; (c) a private commercial network of shops selling spare parts established in the regions. This assumption of responsibility by the beneficiaries implies simultaneous strengthening of activities to raise awareness and activate the population when programmes of equipment are carried out.

217. In the last few years, the SNAPE managers have integrated the "hygiene" dimension and are attempting to get the population to understand the importance of the rules which should be applied to the transport and storage of water. The message seems to have got across well and this is a very positive element in the action of SNAPE. Based on the success of this initiative, SNAPE has requested support from UNICEF to enable it to associate latrine construction with its well construction programmes so as to ensure better protection against pollution.

Table 6

Works of SNAPE as at 31 December 1994

Natural region	Wells	Boreholes	Springs	Total village wells	Rural population served
Maritime Guinea	37	1175	173	1385	
Middle Guinea	558	1149	1270	2977	3 250 000
Upper Guinea	52	1618	2	1672	persons
Forest Guinea	138	678	63	879	
Total	785	4620	1508	6913	

D. Social security and child care services

1. Social security

218. The texts of the Social Security Code promulgated in 1969 are largely in favour of mothers and children. We may quote the following salient points from them:

(a) 14 weeks' fully paid leave (6 weeks before and 8 weeks after delivery) for mothers in paid employment;

(b) Free prenatal consultation services for all citizens;

(c) Free care at delivery for all women;

(d) Free postnatal consultations and immunizations for mother and baby;

(e) Social protection of the child is explicit, giving the social services the possibility to intervene in the whole family where the survival of a child is in danger;

Family allowances are drawn by the head of the household. New provisions in force since 1985 provide for 1500 Guinea francs per child up to ten children and up to the age of 17 years. Certain points in this Code such as the partial reimbursement of prescriptions, or maternity grants equivalent to 125 per cent of the mother's wages payable as a lump sum, have been forgotten over the years. The Code deserves to be adapted to realities.

219. The rights relating to the protection of mothers and children, the children's environment (family, village unit, neighbourhood, districts, schools, etc.) are most often mentioned in instruments dealing with children's rights. This has to do with the degree of danger and other risks to which children are exposed in the course of their development. These risks are endogenous as well as exogenous.

220. Guinean legislation, while taking account of the specificities recognized in each country on account of its realities, does not define measures for the protection of the child such as those defined in the Convention. It can nevertheless be seen from article 16 of the Constitution that the State attaches an important role to marriage, the home and the family for the protection of children. This article stipulates that "marriage and the family which are the natural foundation of life in society, shall be protected and promoted by the State". By protecting the family and marriage, therefore, it can be said that the law which prohibits the separation of parents is favourable to the survival and development of the child who is a victim. Article 359 of the Civil Code also stipulates that "Except where there is special agreement between the parents, children will be entrusted to the care of their fathers once they reach the age of 7. Where mothers have care of a child, the father shall be required to contribute to the child's maintenance while it is a minor".

221. All the conditions of protection and promotion necessary for the child are thus assumed by the parental authority recognized by the customs and local traditions of the country. The instruction, education, maintenance and establishment of the child until its majority are absolute duties of the father. Thus the child is not abandoned if the parents separate. In such cases, the child has the right to visits by both parties with whom it may maintain personal relations.

222. On adoption, article 389 of the Civil Code specifies that adoption of a minor requires the prior consent of its natural parents or at least one of them if the other is unable to express his will. In the case of orphans, a family council gives a ruling which is decisive.

223. On the employment of minors, Guinean legislation is clear in its position of protection of young people: article 5 on page 1 of the Labour Code, states: "A contract of employment may only be concluded with an individual who has attained the age of at least 16 years. Minors of at least 16 years may only be employed with the consent of the authority on which they depend." Concern to maintain surveillance against all possible forms of exploitation of minors by majors that may hamper the full and free development of the victims leads Guinean law to touch upon all aspects of the country's economic, social and cultural life. Thus, on the question of apprenticeship, articles 31 and 32 of the Labour Code affirm that nobody may take on minors as apprentices unless they are aged at least twenty-one years, that nobody may be apprenticed unless they have reached the age of fourteen years, and that no master, if he is single or a widower, may give lodging as apprentices to girls who are minors.

2. Child care services and establishments

224. Order No 300/PRG/94 of 27 October 1984, enacting freedom of private initiative in education, definition of educational establishments and stipulating the conditions in which these establishments may open has governed pre-school education in Guinea. The conditions of opening of pre-school education establishments are stipulated in decree No D/96/023/PRG/SGE.

225. Since 1987, a manifest political will has been formulated in the Government through seminars and forums to envisage the implementation in favour of the child of reference instruments and an appropriate national policy.

In 1990, with the technical and financial support of UNICEF, the public authorities elaborated and defined the major orientations of policy regarding small children in the perspective of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

226. The parts of this policy are summarized in three distinct programmes:

(a) Programme I. Education of mothers: raise the level of education of all mothers, or persons taking their place;

(b) Programme II. Creation of child care services: offer a maximum of children child care services that favour their development;

(c) Programme III. Take account of children requiring special attention: enable integration into normal life of deprived, abandoned, handicapped or orphaned children.

(a) Infrastructures and functioning

227. Before these programmes were launched in 1990, pre-school education made a timid beginning with nine nursery schools in Conakry, including one public nursery school; four in Maritime Guinea and three in Forest Guinea. After ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the World Conference on Education for All, pre-school education took on a new dimension both in terms of the number of recognized pre-school establishments and the rate of attendance, and in the dynamization of the educational system and the training of supervisory staff.

228. In spite of the efforts which enabled 134 nursery schools, four orphanages and a home to be opened between 1984 and 1995, and the substantial increase in attendance by children aged 3 to 6 years, the often unsuitable or antiquated character of the infrastructures is to be deplored. It must also be said that the majority of the population does not have the means to pay the fees and that the quality of education is generally below expectations for lack of qualified staff.

229. In view of the disparity of child care services in the national territory, a programme of informal education was initiated with the financial and technical support of UNICEF. This involved setting up twenty community centres for the supervision of young children, at a first stage, to enable:

(a) The creation of several child care services;

(b) Access by 600 000 children to the community supervision centres and transfer to rural communities of the new techniques of child supervision;

(c) Nutritional follow-up of children at the community centres; and

(d) Intellectual and psychomotor education at the community centres, so that mothers can get on with their daily work in peace and play a large part in family welfare.

(b) Present constraints

230. The constraints that weigh upon pre-school education are:

(a) The notorious inadequacy of the structures for the supervision of young children;

(b) The inadequacy of the infrastructures, often antiquated and unsuitable;

(c) The almost complete lack of equipment, toilets and nursery furniture;

(d) The poor qualification of the supervisors of child care centres, and often their poor remuneration;

(e) The notorious lack of State subsidies to the private pre-school sector;

(f) The clear inadequacy of public structures for supervision;

(g) School fees too high for most of the population;

(h) Lack of State support to the community supervision centres programmes;

(i) The almost total lack of supervision of pre-school establishments in the interior of the country;

(j) The existence of "clandestine" establishments which completely escape control by the central structure.

(c) Objectives for 1995 and 1996

231. Faced with the overall education situation which is fairly precarious, intermediate objectives were adopted for 1995-1996:

(a) Favour extension of pre-school services to 3% of urban children aged 3 to 6 years;

(b) redynamize the twenty community centres for the supervision of young children already established.

232. To attain these intermediate objectives, the following strategies connected with the supply of pre-school education were worked out:

(a) Elaboration of a national policy document on young children;

(b) Redynamization of the twenty centres for the supervision of young children;

(c) Collection of basic data on pre-school teaching;

(d) Adequate construction and equipment of premises for the supervision of young children (one nursery school with five classes for each natural region);

(e) Consolidation of activities for the retraining of pre-school teachers;

(f) Training of staff for the centres for the supervision of young children;

(g) Strengthening of the monitoring of the supervision centres;

(h) Harmonization of supervision programmes;

(i) Raising of awareness of partners in the field.

E. Handicapped children

1. Blind and deaf-mute

233. There are not enough data in existence concerning handicapped children in Guinea. However, the Guinean Association for the Promotion of the Blind has identified about 10 000 blind children. The socio-occupational conditions of these children pose problems when it comes to their education, vocational training and employment. For the country as a whole, there is only one primary school with six classes founded in 1965 at Conakry: it has 109 pupils, of whom 37 are girls.

234. There is also a school for deaf-mutes directed by a deaf person. Lessons are given in sign language by teachers who are 90% deaf-mute. There are six teachers and four contractual supervisory staff. Apart from the actual lessons, other services are offered on the premises of the school which are adapted for them, in particular audiometry and speech therapy services.

2. Relevant legislative texts

235. Article 17 of the Basic Law stipulates "...handicapped people shall benefit from assistance from Society". Furthermore, law No. 85/CTRN ratifies and promulgates Convention No. 159 on the professional rehabilitation and employment of handicapped people, adopted on 28 June 1983 by the International Labour Conference.

3. Constraints and perspectives

236. The constraints and difficulties are of three orders: (a) educational (lack of specialized teachers and appropriate programmes and learning materials), (b) material (inadequacy of infrastructure and school equipment, shortage of school and office supplies), and (c) institutional (absence of a sectoral policy on the handicapped and reliable statistical data).

237. As for perspectives, it is planned to elaborate a sectoral policy document for the management of handicapped people.

VIII. PERSPECTIVES FOR COOPERATION

238. The implementation of the national programme aiming to ensure the best conditions of survival, protection, development and participation of all children in Guinea is facilitated by close coordination with other national and international partners, namely the specialized agencies of the United Nations, bilateral cooperation agencies and national and international NGOs. The United Nations agency most involved with the preparation, elaboration and execution of programmes in favour of children is UNICEF. The intervention of other actors should, however, be noted (the WFP, for example), in nutritional support to children in the child care services; the Cuban Embassy in the training of supervisory staff; China in the provision of educational and play materials and national and international NGOs and voluntary workers in the field of the promotion of children's rights.

239. Balanced and lasting universal evolution undoubtedly hinges on national and international cooperation. But it is a deplorable fact that the Ministry responsible for children does not have a well-filled agenda for this. There is demonstrable political will for the survival and development of the child, but it needs to be able to count on healthy and diversified cooperation in order to attain objectives.

240. Finally, one of the fundamental features of the situation of young children in Guinea is the scale of the needs in the face of the scarce resources available. The first investigations carried out in this field (preliminary studies, efforts to raise awareness) do indeed make for greater understanding of this situation, but this realization still falls short of aspirations.

241. To attenuate the enormous difficulties engendered by this critical situation, it is necessary and urgent, on the one hand, to envisage the coordination of activities following the improvement of mother and baby care, family planning and the education of mothers, and on the other hand, to take into consideration the informal structures of protection and education of young children with a view to increasing the contribution they can make to improving the situation.

Conclusion

242. Evaluation of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child which is the subject of this initial report by Guinea shows that, although certain difficulties persist, the Government has made huge efforts to improve the situation of children. These efforts are particularly substantial in the health and education sectors which have undergone far-reaching changes in the last few years. The expanded programme of immunization, primary health care and essential drugs and the sectoral adjustment programme for education are programmes especially targeting women and children.

243. In the field of the supervision of young children, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Promotion of Women and Children is in the process of a thorough overhaul of the system to correct the imbalances which limit its normal functioning. In the framework of the policy of decentralization and liberalization of private initiatives, the Government's policy is to aim to

favour management by grassroots communities, NGOs and the private sector of the levers of participative and self-centred development.

244. Measures to develop the skills, initiatives and information of the actors is one of the major concerns of the Ministry; among these actors, the place of women is paramount with the front-line role and place they play in the development of the child. This was the justification for the creation in 1994 of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Children, changed in July 1996 to the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women and Children, for the implementation, in the framework of integrated policies and programmes, of actions aiming at the promotion of children through education and the promotion of women.

245. It is in the perspective of this framework that the new orientations in the development of the Guinean child must be seen. In the years to come, many programmes are envisaged in favour of children. The Government's firm determination, the commitment of the international community and international solidarity are the buttresses for the success of these noble ambitions. This commitment is evidenced by the elaboration of the UNICEF/Government of Guinea future programme of cooperation (1997-2000).

Annex 1

SOME RECENT INDICATORS

1. Budget information

In 1986, education absorbed 7.12 per cent of the national development budget apart from debt servicing as compared with 14.6 per cent, 25.7 per cent and 25.2 per cent in 1990, 1991 and 1992 respectively. However, when debt servicing is included, these figures fall to 5.1 per cent, and then 8.9 per cent, 12.4 per cent and 7.8 per cent respectively. With regard to the health sector, the corresponding figures are 6 per cent for 1986 as compared with 3 per cent in 1990, and 4.2 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively for 1991 and 1992. Moreover, under the public investment budget, education only received 5 per cent of the budget on average for the period 1986-1992, while for the health sector the corresponding figure was scarcely 2.5 per cent on average.

2. Education indicators

The crude rate of school enrolment rose from 27.52 per cent at the beginning of the programme of structural adjustment in education in 1990 (with 19.37 per cent among girls and 20.6 per cent in the rural areas) to 31.9 per cent in 1992 (with 19.6 per cent among girls and 23.98 per cent in the rural areas); for the year 1992-1993, this rate rose to 37.4 per cent (with 23.6 per cent among girls and 27.4 per cent in the rural areas). The rate of first year admissions was 28.8 per cent in 1990 (with 15.5 per cent among girls and 20.7 per cent in the rural areas).

3. Health indicators

The number of health centres refurbished progressed from 30 per cent in 1986 to 28.3 per cent in 1994, which brought health coverage up from 10 % in 1986 to 80 per cent of the population in 1994. The number of refurbished referral hospitals rose from 2 per cent in 1986 to 26 per cent in 1994 thus providing coverage of 5 per cent in 1986 rising to 75 per cent in 1994. Immunization coverage rose from 5 per cent in 1986 to 75 per cent in 1993 for BCG; 1 per cent in 1986 to 55 per cent in 1993 for DPT3/Polio 3; and from 2 per cent in 1986 to 57 per cent in 1993 for measles. The infant mortality rate fell from 155 p. 1 000 in 1987 to 132 p. 1 000 in 1992. The maternal mortality rate fell from an average level of 800 p. 1 000 to 675 p. 1 000, with 820 p. 1 000 in the rural areas.

4. Water indicator

Covergae of drinking water requirements in the rural communities rose from 10 per cent in 1980 to more than 60 per cent in 1994.

5. Miscellaneous data

Active population: 53%
Population of childbearing age (15-49 years): 25%
Crude rate of natural growth: 2.4%
Contraceptive prevalence: less than 2%
Adult literacy rate: 20%
Per capita income: 490 United States dollars

Annex 2

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

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